A ſure Refuge in the Time of Danger.

THE ESSENCE OF TRUE RELIGION: A DIVINE POEM.

(Extracted from the Old and New Teſtament.)

By A STUDENT of *Oxford.*

THE SECOND EDITION
REVISED and CORRECTED, by J. W. S.

Put on the whole Armour of God:—For we fight not againſt Fleſh and Blood, but againſt Principalities, againſt Powers, againſt the Rulers of darkneſs of this World, and againſt ſpiritual wickedneſs in HIGH PLACES: Wherefore take unto you the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to ſtand in this EVIL DAY. Eph. vi. 11, 12, 13.

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THE ESSENCE OF TRUE RELIGION.

GREAT Source of all our Being! Jehovah nam'd,
By whom the World and all therein was fram'd;
Who ſaid, "Let there be light[a]," and light ſprang forth,
And ev'ry Thing inanimate receiv'd it's Birth!
Aſſiſt my Thoughts, while I attempt to ſhew
The great bleſt Gift beſtow'd on Man below.
RELIGION! ſacred Sound, Offspring of Heav'n,
To poor, deluded, ſin-ſick Mortals giv'n;
"To heal their Sickneſs, purge their ev'ry Stain[b],"
And teach them Life immortal to *regain!*

[a] Gen. iv. 41. [b] 1 Cor. i. 11.

How ſhall we name Thee? how deſcribe thy Worth?
Or ſet thy high intrinſic Glories forth?
All human Efforts ſtrive in vain to trace
The radiant Lines of thy effulgent Face:
The brighteſt Image falls immenſely ſhort,
Lab'ring to paint, and ſhew THEE as thou art:
Thy Countenance too glorious to behold;
When all is ſaid, the Half is ſtill untold.
The ſparkling Shine eludes created Pow'rs;
The ſilent Seraph wonders and adores.

Thou VINE of GOD's own planting[a]! from whoſe Boughs,
And cluſt'ring Grapes, ambroſial Nectar flows:
Nay, richer Juice, ſince thy cœleſtial Wine
Revives the fainting Soul;—and makes divine!
Who taſtes of Thee, partakes immortal Joy;
Pleaſures that never ſatiate, never cloy.
With Life, with Health, with Peace his Cup runs o'er,
Whoſe Thirſt is quench'd by THEE, and thirſts no more[b]!

Thou hidden Manna! all enliv'ning Food;
Repaſt of Angels, and each Son of God:

[a] Jer. ii. 21. [b] John iv. 11.

Cœ

Cœleſtial Bread! peculiar Gift of Heav'n,
Nightly in dewy Show'rs diſpens'd and giv'n.
GOD's own Elect, his choſen Race to bleſs,
Whilſt traverſing this dreary Wilderneſs,
By Thee refreſh'd and chear'd from Day to Day,
The toiling Pilgrims tread the dreary Way;
O'er Rocks and Sands, unhurt their Steps purſue,
(The promis'd Land is all they have in view)
To *Canaan*'s bliſsful Soil, where blended Rills
Of Milk and Honey ſtream from all the Hills.
Thither, ſuſtain'd by thy Life-giving Force,
They ſafe arrive, nor Death obſtructs their Courſe,
Swallow'd is Death, abſorb'd Mortality:
"For whoſo eats this Bread, ſhall never die[c]."

Pearl of great Price! ineſtimable Stone,
Who ev'ry Treaſure haſt compriz'd in one.
The Gold of *Ophir*, and the *Indian* Mine,
With all the Riches of the World, are thine:
The brighteſt Jewel owns it's borrow'd Rays,
Mimics thy Luſtre and ſuperior Blaze.
Poſſeſs'd of Thee the Beggar finds a Store,
Eclipſing Emp'rors, making rich Men poor:

[c] John vi. 51.

Supply'd his Wants, fulfill'd his Heart's Deſires
By Thee, he's King in Dungeons, Racks, or Fires.
Thou feed'ſt him hungry, and Thou cloath'ſt him bare;
Softens each ſigh, and dries up every Tear.
No Pain, no Poverty, can him annoy;
Th' heavieſt Mis'ry thou tranſmut'ſt to Joy:
A "Joy that glories in Affliction's Hour[d],"
And midſt all mortal Ills, "is more than Conq'ror."
The Subſtance thou that fabled was of old;
The "choice white Stone[e]," converting all to Gold.
Thou Heavenly Kingdom! where true Glory deigns
To fix her Seat, and bleſs the peaceful Plains;
Where Truth and Juſtice ceaſeleſs Tributes bring,
And ev'ry Subject is both Prieſt and King.
Where none Diſeaſes, Pain, or Sickneſs feels,
But Health and Righteouſneſs eternal dwells.
Here none complains, becauſe no Evil's here;
Far from Oppreſſion all, and far from Fear.
Here living Fountains ev'ry Thirſt ſupply,
And ev'ry Tear is wip'd from ev'ry Eye.
Here laden Trees their Fruits ambroſial yield,
That riſe high tow'ring in th' Elyſian Field.

[d] Rom. v. 36. [e] Rev. ix. 17.

Here

The vital Fruits the healing Leaves apply,
All Things conſent to Symphony and Joy.
The Vallies laugh, the Woods with Muſic ring,
And Nature ſmiles in one eternal Spring.
The ſaved Nations on Gold Pavements tread,
White Robes inveſt their Limbs, and glitt'ring
Crowns their Head.
No Night is there where Truth's eſſential Ray
Creates, maintains an everlaſting Day:
A Day that ſheds its Beams thro' all the Plains,
And wide-extended Realms, where GOD's MESSIAH reigns.

Divine RELIGION! Mark extreme of Good,
Bright Emanation from the Throne of GOD.
Pure Light of Truth, and ſacred Fire of Love[f],
To ſave the Loſt, deſcending from above:
Balm of our Woe and Healer of our Grief,
From all Diſtreſs thou ſovereign Relief.
Art thou deſpis'd, of Men rejected Thou!
Who graciouſly did'ſt deign to ſtoop ſo low,
Leaving thy radiant Seat, thy Father's Side
For wretched Man! with them awhile t' abide.

[f] Pet. i. 12.

Their captive Souls for to redeem from Hell,
And teach Perdition's Heirs Salvation's Joys to feel.
Ye circling Heavens, whoſe thouſand flaming Eyes,
Note all our Actions from the lofty Skies [g];
Aſtoniſh'd view! with deepeſt Wonder gaze
On the baſe Madneſs of our fallen Race.
And thou dull Planet, Earth! whoſe hardeſt ſtones
Are much leſs hard than thy obdurate Sons;
Whoſe Sin-ſteel'd Hearts not Mercy's ſelf can ſhake,
O tremble for them, to thy Centre quake [h].
Reject RELIGION! O, enormous Guilt!
Trample on that for which Chriſt's Blood was ſpilt:
What rent the Rocks, what made the Graves to yawn,
Will unrelenting Worms dare tread upon?
With ſcorn deride, to Mockery expoſe,
What ſcreens the guilty Soul from never-dying Woes
From deepeſt Gulphs of Woe, tranſlates to Bliſs,
High, wide, and large as the Eternities!
Can GOD's own Image ſo far league with Hell,
In Heav'n-born Minds can ſuch Perverſeneſs dwell!
Minds form'd at firſt a pure etherial Flame,
Aſcending bright to Heav'n from whence it came;

[g] Jer. ii. 12. [h] Matt. xxvii. 51, 52.

Unting'

Unting'd with Evil, all untainted glow'd,
And knew no Paſſions, but the Love of GOD.
O woful Change! O dire Cataſtrophe!
What hellliſh Witchcraft has prevail'd o'er thee?
Thou God-like Beam, thou breath of Air divine,
What Poiſon ſullied thus thy illuſtrious Shine?
Has *Satan*'s Envy ſtol'n thy bliſsful Reſt,
And with ſerpentine Venom ſcorch'd thy Breaſt?
A Murd'rer he when Time its Race began:
Ah! too ſucceſsful Murd'rer of fall'n Man.
Reſtleſs his Malice burns till we're undone,
Effac'd GOD's Image and infus'd his own.
His own infus'd, our Love to Hatred turns,
And the fall'n Creature its true Glory ſcorns,
Loaths her beſt Bliſs, diſdains her higheſt Good,
And ſpurns the Bleſſings of a bounteous GOD.
"Forſakes the Spring where living Waters roll'd,
For half-hewn Ciſterns which no Water hold;"
ETERNAL TRUTH, divine Realities,
Barter'd and ſold for Vanity and Lyes.
O wretched Race! What Words can paint thy Loſs,
Where pureſt Gold is thus transform'd to Droſs?

Immortal,

Immortal, holy, harmleſs Sons of GOD,
Enſlav'd to Death, a ſinful vip'rous Brood:
Of Heirs of Heav'n and Joys ineffable,
Now reſtleſs Vaſſals of the Prince of Hell!

Stupendous Ruin! forcing Nature's Groans[i];
Who bears reluctant her degen'rate Sons.
Travels in painful Throes, to 'ſcape the Load
Of Sin's prolific Curſe, the WRATH of GOD.

Now Rapine, Violence their Tears engage;
And Juſtice baniſh'd by oppreſſive Rage.
To weep the Guilt, ſhe ſummons all the Seas,
Fountains and Floods, t' aſſiſt her Agonies;
Her Deeps break up, her Rains inceſſant pour[k],
Till Earth is delug'd in th' exuberant Show'r.
Th' outrageous Sins it could no longer bear,
O'erwhelm'd and ſunk in melting Nature's Tear.

The riſing Age ruſh on from bad to worſe[l],
A World of Sinners drown'd undrown'd the Cur
From Hell's profoundeſt Deep new Sins ariſe,
Unnatural Acts alarm the bluſhing Skies:
Aghaſt, and ſhock'd indulgent Nature ſtands,
To change their Courſe, the Elements commend;

[i] Rom. viii. 22. [k] Gen. vii. 11. [l] Ibid xviii. 21

Th' inverting Crime to ſcourge ſh' inverts her Ire,
And rains on *Sodom*'s Sons Cat'racts of Fire.

To purge the World theſe dreadful Judgments fail,
O'er Floods and Fires, Sin's Mountain, Sins prevail.
As *Sodom*'s Flames and *Noah*'s Waters ceaſe,
The Floods of Vice and Fires of Luſt increaſe: [m]
With mingling Fury ravage far and wide,
All Nations drenching in the poiſon'd Tide.
Drunk with th' invenom'd Cup they ſtagg'ring reel,
To Idol Stocks and Stones the *Pagans* kneel.
With Rites obſcene, their carved Gods adore, [n]
And unto Devils horrid Off'rings pour.
Their tend'reſt Infants Blood their Altars ſtain,
And Sins pil'd up to Heav'n proclaim the Monſter Man.

Impatient to ſuſtain th' atrocious Race,
The tott'ring Earth now trembles to her Baſe;
Opens her Mouth to make the Miſcreants Room,
And buries Millions in the gaping Tomb.

Now ſhe emits a peſtilential Breath,
Devoting Nations to contagious Death:

[m] Rom. i. 25, &c. [n] 1 Cor. x. 20.

Heaps pil'd on Heaps all undiſtinguiſh'd die,
Like Brutes they periſh, and forgotten lie.

Now ſhe with-holds her Corn, her Fruits denies,
Calls forth pale Famine with her haggard Eyes:
In ſtarving Need the full-fed Wantons pine,
In thouſand ling'ring Deaths their Breath reſign,
While others, prompted on by Avarice and Pride,
Sweep every Wave, and ſtop the flowing Tide.

Now with Ambition mad, and fir'd with Rage,
The kindred Nations in dread War engage.
By Nature Brethren, wrongful Swords employ,
Each other to extirpate and deſtroy. *
From Sire to Son th' inſatiate Wrath extends,
The more than brutal Fury never ends.
Their Kind conſanguine to expunge they try,
Till countleſs Miriads mutual Victims die:
And Infants yet unborn ſhall feel the Miſery.

The Scourge of angry Heav'n juſt Vengeance comes;
Theſe various Forms and dreadful Shapes aſſumes:

---

* See the unhappy Diſpute between Great Britain and her Colonies; which may God, of his infinite Mercy ſpeedily put an End to.

Provok'

Provok'd ſhe fiercely ſhakes her fourfold Rod[o],
T' avenge the injur'd Goodneſs of her GOD.
Goodneſs that gave th' ungrateful Rebels Breath,
Goodneſs that bought them from the Chains of Death:
Call'd them to Life, from Nothing's empty Void[p],
Redeem'd that very Life Sin once deſtroy'd.

What Guilt can equal ſuch abuſed Love?
What adamantine Heart its Pow'r can't move?
Patience how deep; how ſtrong that Mercy's Pow'r,
That ſpares ſuch hell-ſteel'd Sinners to devour!

But for a Few, ordain'd his Name to bear[q],
Whoſe Breaſts are ſeaſon'd with his Love and Fear;
Who conſtitute his Church in ev'ry Age,
His Soul's Delight, his choſen Heritage.
Salt of a fœtid Earth, a beaming Light,
To chear the World's dark Gloom and pitchy Night.
Of awful Praiſe theſe filial Tributes bring,
Adoring low their Father-GOD, and King.
He deigns well-pleas'd t' accept the Sacrifice:
Their Pray'rs as Incenſe to his throne ariſe[r].
Elſe would his Fury ſmoke, his Wrath would burn,
Diſſolve Earth's Fabrick from its Axis torn.

[o] Ezek. xiv. 13. [p] Pſ. cxlviii. 5. [q] Matt. vii. 14. [r] Pſ. cxli 2.

His Juſtice would prevent the dreadful Day,
When, with reſounding Noiſe, the Heav'ns ſhall
paſs away [s];
When melting Elements ſhall then fermented glow
And, wrapt in liquid Flames, the calcin'd Globe
ſhall flow.

Tremendous Period! Nature's diſtin'd End;
Whoſe ſwift approaching Hour is on the bend.
Creation waiting with upliſted Hands [t],
Erect with earneſt Expectations ſtands.
Till Truth's bright Eye has view'd the Nations
round,
And all the *Heathen* hear the Goſpel-Sound.
Then comes the final Doom, when like the Sun [w],
The Church her Courſe from Eaſt to Weſt has run
Long ſince from fertile *Aſia*'s diſtant Soil,
Her firſt bleſt Seat, ſhe reach'd our favour'd Iſle,
Thro' lengthen'd Ages here her Ground maintain'd
A num'rous Army of brave Soldiers gain'd;
Dread Perſecution's Rage who firmly ſtood,
Boldly confeſs'd her Truths, and ſeal'd them with
their Blood.

[s] 1 Pet. iii. 7—10. [t] Rom. viii. 19. [w] Matt. xxii. 14.

From us the bleſſed Goſpel ſounded forth
To Weſtern Iſlands with ſucceſsful Growth;
Strew'd with this precious Seed, the *Savage* Strand
And barren Soil becomes a fruitful Land.
Comely and fair, lo! infant Churches riſe!
But as the Children grow the Mother dies.
Lively the Suckers ſprout, and vig'rous ſhoot,
But drain the Juices from the Parent Root.
Religion's Spirit there new Life conveys,
Whilſt here its Fervor dwindles and decays.
There Health and Vigour deck her youthful Sons,
The Parent Church reduc'd to Age dry'd Bones.
A wither'd Form, an half-dead Skeleton,
Whoſe hov'ring Spirit's ready to be gone.

The Mournful Exit and expiring Doom
Of *Aſian*, *Grecian*, and the Church of *Rome!*
WhoſeGlory's fled, eclips'd their radiant Light,
Envelop'd lies in Superſtition's Night.
Menacing Wrath hangs dreadful o'er our Head,
Who have a Name to live, whilſt well nigh dead*.
Dead to that Faith which works by humble Love,
"The Gift of God," which nothing can remove.

* Rom. iii. 2.

Avert,

Avert, O God! dear *England*'s coming Fate!
Nor let her Sighs and Groans aſcend too late;
Let penitential Tears run down her Face,
And deprecating Pray'rs aſſail the Throne of Grac
Weep, weep, ye Prieſts, like *Hezekiah* mourn,
Till our declining Light, the Goſpel Sun return,
The Church with heav'nly Life to re-inſpire,
And kindle up true Faith's myſterious Fire.

Then ſhould our Sires, our martyr'd Sires reviv
Our Fathers Graces in their Sons would live:
Plants of Renown adorn fair *Sion*'s Field,
And ev'ry burning Saint another *Phœnix* yield.
Pious and learned *Bev'ridge* now would riſe,
From Nature's ſelfiſh Miſts to purge the Skies,
Nervous and clear a SAVIOUR's Merits prove,
Whilſt fervent *Ken* excites our Hearts to Love.
Bleſs'd with th' Inſtructions the Apoſtles taught,
Doctrines of Life with heav'nly Virtue *fraught*;[c]
Virtue, that bids the Sin-dead Soul to riſe,
Tho' deaf to hear, tho' blind to lift her Eyes:
To GOD's free Grace her loſt Eſtate reſign,
By Faith accepting Righteouſneſs divine:

[b] Joel ii. 17. [c] Acts v. 20.

Divin

ivine, ſince purchas'd by IMMANUEL's Blood, [b]
gives the Nature, Light and Life of GOD. [c]
Righteouſneſs that cloaths the Mind with Pow'r,
HRIST's Yoke and Croſs with patient Love t' en-
dure;
ill Sin's ſubdu'd, till *Satan* vanquiſh'd lie;
And Death is ſwallow'd up in Victory."
Righteouſneſs renew'd, our Spirits bear
heir bright primæval Form, GOD's Stamp and
Character.
Let Scoffers jeer, and Infidels deny
ur holy Faith in CHRIST, great Myſtery.
he gnawing *Worm*, the never-dying Fire,
n CHRIST's Religion can alone expire.
is dear *Atonement* our Redemption ſeal'd,
is Death's our Life, His Stripes our Bruiſes heal'd.
he Blood divine that ſtream'd from ev'ry Wound,
radicates our Griefs, th' expiring renders ſound.
hat *Gilead*'s Balm cures ev'ry tort'ring Pain,
orks out each Taint of Guilt, and makes the
Leper clean.
he Sinner ſlain, the Saint reviv'd ſhall feel,
oretaſtes of Heav'n, Delights unutt'rable.

[b] 2 Pet. i. 4. Eph. iv. 6. [c] 2 Cor. iv. 6.

A PRAYER.

Thou DEITY *benign! O hear my Prayer;*
This ſinful Nation let thy Patience ſpare.
We have thy Grace abus'd, thy Son deny'd,
The Lord of Life and Glory crucify'd.
Afreſh, reproach'd his Truth, blaſphem'd his Name,
Expos'd his Merits to Contempt and Shame:
O deal not with us as our Crimes deſerve,
In Famine of thy Word condemn us not to ſtarve!
Withdraw not, Lord, thy Spirit's grieved Light,
Nor ſentence Briton *to* Egyptian *Night!*
Juſtly thou may'ſt, yet 'holy GOD *and true,"*
"*Forgive, forgive, they know not what they do!*"
But let thy Mercy's Streams again o'erflow,
In our Repentance; thy Compaſſions ſhew:
Nor let that native Blood late ſpilt in vain,
(Thro' the atrocious Schemes of wicked Men)
Bring down thy heavy Wrath, and endleſs Pain.

"*Arm of the Lord, awake!*" *thy Paw'r diſplay,*
Revive thy Work in our degen'rate Day.
Make Myriads hear thy Goſpel's pow'rful Call,
And hearing, proſtrate at thy Footſtool fall.

Then as pure Rivers flow, ſhould flow our Peace,
Abound as Ocean's Floods our Righteouſneſs,
And England *once again find Favour and ſucceſs.*

A MORNING Thought, &c.

AS I beheld the glorious Sun ariſe,
Scatt'ring the Miſty Clouds that veil'd the Skys,
And ſend along his ever chearing Ray:
What ardour then inflam'd my raviſh'd Sight,
To ſee remov'd the Curtins of the Night;
All Nature chear'd, and every thing look gay.
When furious Winds, tempeſtious Storms ariſe,
And dreadful Darkneſs ſhrouds the azure Skies:
Each yawning Gulph appears a gaping Grave.
Then with what Joy the Mariners behold,
The eaſtern Dawn, its chearful Light unfold,
And ſee becalm'd each gentle rolling Wave.
Thus would it be to every honeſt Mind,
Who loves his King, his Country and his Friend,
To ſee true Peace and harmony reſtor'd:
Blood-thirſty Men with all their Schemes remov'd,
The Wiſe, the Juſt, the Honeſt Man approv'd:
With Bleſſing pour'd on Bleſſing from the LORD.
Then may Great GEORGE *rejoice upon his Throne,*
Whom GOD eſtabliſh long in Righteouſneſs;
His Subject's Hearts, and Kingdom all his own,
Long may he Reign, his People thus to bleſs.

FINIS.

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